

What Would Hughes Have Done?

A Pertinent Question Regarding the Eight-Hour Law That He Has Not Answered—Wilson Wins High Praise For Averting R. R. Strike.

Only Way Available, and Would G. O. P. Candidate Have Acted Otherwise, If President?—The New York Times, a Strong Republican Paper, Endorses Wilson's Course.

"What Would Mr. Hughes Have Done?" is the title of an important editorial published September 8 in the New York Times, setting forth President Wilson's service to the country by the prevention of the great railroad strike and revealing the partisan mendacity of the attacks made by Candidate Hughes and the Republicans upon the method employed by the President to avert the seemingly inevitable catastrophe to the prosperity of the country.

It is clearly demonstrated that, if he had been President, Hughes would have done precisely as Wilson did—or needlessly have forced the nation into the

most costly and far-reaching labor war in its history.

By way of introduction, the Times editorial quoted from Hughes' Nashville speech as follows:

"I would not surrender to anybody in the country. * * * I stand for two things: First, for the principle of fair, impartial, thorough, candid arbitration; and, second, for legislation on facts according to the necessities of the case. And I am opposed to being dictated to, either in the executive department or in Congress, by any power on earth before the facts are known, and in the absence of the facts. We have a great country and a great future, but it can be preserved only in one way—the way of honest, fair investigation and candid treatment. Show me the way that is right and I will take it, but I won't take any way that I do not know anything about."

"Well, what way would Mr. Hughes have taken?" the editorial asks. What would he have done? Here was Mr. Wilson's position: The brotherhoods refused arbitration, the railroad presidents would not accept the settlement Mr. Wilson proposed, granting the eight-hour standard day with provision for an impartial inquiry into its working. There was no law on the statute books to enforce arbitration. The president knew, knew with certainty and beyond question, that he could not get such a law from Congress now in session. The sure and inevitable alternative to his acceptance of the eight-hour standard day measure was a strike, the suspension of railway service, freight and passenger, all over the country, beginning on the morning of September 4.

Would Have Caused Strike.

"Mr. Hughes 'would not surrender to anybody in the country.' Then he would have surrendered the country to the disturbance, immeasurable loss, and peril of a strike. Would he, in fact, have done that? In his position of 'greater freedom and less responsibility' as a candidate he says that he would yield to nobody. Had he been president, confronted by that situation, failing in his appeal to the brotherhoods on the one hand and to the railroad presidents on the other, and with a Congress of which it was perfectly hopeless to ask for an enabling arbitration act, would Mr. Hughes have brought on a strike by refusing to sign the bill granting a wage increase? The manner of its enactment was hateful to all right-thinking Americans, it was in truth a surrender by Congress, the National Legislature acted under threat and duress, it was humiliating, it was shameful. But there was the strike in plain sight, a few hours away, sure to come. Would Mr. Hughes have vetoed the bill? On the contrary, would he not have done just what Mr. Wilson did—sign it?"

"The Republican candidate stands for two things: 'First, for the principle of fair, impartial, thorough, candid arbitration; and, second, for legislation on facts according to the necessities of the case.' Mr. Wilson stands for those two things and much more, has pledged himself to use all his influence to secure them. What more could Mr. Hughes do? Would it be too much to ask the Republican candidate to put a little common fairness into his speeches? Is he afraid to tell his audiences what the president actually did urge upon Congress?"

Comprehensive Plan.

"I earnestly recommend the following legislation" said the president in his address to both houses of Congress on August 29. He then specified, first, an enlargement of the Interstate Commerce Commission to enable it better to perform its many great, various, and new duties; second, the establishment of the eight-hour day as the legal basis of work and wage for railway employees engaged in operating trains; third, the appointment of a commission to study the actual working of the eight-hour day in railway transportation 'alike for the men and for the railroads,' its effect in the matter of operating costs, and to report to Congress, to the end that the public might be informed as to the results; fourth, 'explicit approval by the Congress of the consideration by the Interstate Commerce Commission of an increase of freight rates,' should an increase be rendered necessary by the adoption of an eight-hour plan; fifth, an amendment of the Newlands act providing for a compulsory public investigation of the merits of labor disputes, strikes or lockouts attempted before the completion of the investigation to be made unlawful; sixth, the vesting in

the Executive of the power to take control of railways required for military use and to operate them by drafting into the military service train crews and administration officials should such action become necessary. As a true champion of arbitration, President Wilson recommended further that arbitration judgments be made records of a court of law, in order that their interpretation and enforcement may not lie with the parties to the dispute, but 'with an impartial and authoritative tribunal.'

A Permanent Solution.

"These things," said the President, 'I urge upon you, not in haste or merely as a means of meeting the present emergency, but as permanent and necessary additions to the law of the land.' It was his purpose in this recommendation to provide against future emergencies, to prevent the recurrence of such dangers as then confronted him and the country.

"Mr. Hughes and the Republicans, having failed in the first two months of the campaign to discover any issues to which the country would pay attention, have eagerly seized upon the issues of the threatened railroad strike and they are using it to the best of their knowledge and ability. They are trying to make the people believe that the President got the eight-hour standard day measure through Congress, did nothing else, proposed nothing else. The truth is that it was his purpose not merely to meet a special emergency but to declare a general policy. He did declare one, a policy of remedial legislation. He earnestly recommended it to Congress. In fact, he did everything that Mr. Hughes says he would have done, save only refusing 'to surrender to anybody in the country,' by which Mr. Hughes means, if he means anything, refusing to sign the strike bill. Mr. Hughes, too, would have signed it, we are convinced. So what becomes of the issue? The candidate of the Republicans stands upon the identical labor platform upon which the President has already taken his place—with this sole exception, that Mr. Hughes now would have us believe that he would have vetoed the preventive measure and let the brotherhoods do their worst to the country."

Hughes a National Peril.

"The people of the United States are not going to be put off with misinformation as to what the President did to avert a strike and to prevent the threat of future strikes. We have reason to believe that the full revelation of what he did, what he tried to do, and what he nearly succeeded in doing in the White House conference would put such a phase upon the matter that Republican efforts to make an issue of it would fall entirely flat. But the people do know, for it was put before them in the President's address to Congress, that he proposed not a single emergency act, but a broad program of legislation to meet a public danger and permanently remove a public danger. It was a program which we are convinced the railroads would be very wise to accept in its entirety. Certainly it seems to us that they are ill advised to pray for the election of Mr. Hughes, who, if they take him at his word, would have brought on the strike, with all its irreparable injuries to the country's business and peril for the country's peace."

DECORATE A. F. OF L. HOME.

Washington, D. C.—C. W. Bowerman, secretary Parliamentary Committee British Trades Union Congress, has forwarded President Gompers a photograph of the piece of marble sculpture, entitled "The Triumph of Labor," which will be installed in the new American Federation of Labor building as a fraternal expression by English trade unionists. The work will be enclosed in a frame of English oak, with a gilt bronze band of laurel surrounding. The size of the marble will be 6x3 feet.

Secretary Bowerman writes:

"The central figure is symbolic of the triumph and is standing upon an octopus with tentacles lopped and dying, slain by the noble aims and objects achieved by labor. Behind this figure is a great procession without beginning or end. On one side are the earliest types of workers—husbandmen and tillers of the earth—and on the other the modern workers. Laborers, agriculturists, miners and various other trades are represented. In the background, ships, cranes, etc."

DUTY WELL DONE



Geo. E. Rendigs, Building Commissioner.

Geo. E. Rendigs, the capable and efficient Building Commissioner, is an old-time friend of organized labor and we were very much pleased to learn that the City Council had raised his salary in recognition of the excellent work his department is doing.

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The Cincinnati Rubber Manufacturing Company is a concern that the Queen City should be proud of. They manufacture a full line of mechanical rubber goods, hose, belting, packing, valves and special modeled articles: red sheet packing, garden hose, conducting hose, suction hose, steam hose, and a full line of leather belting. They hire home labor and pay good wages, and as their prices are right they should get the support of union engineers and other crafts using these goods.

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READ LORENTZ ADS.

Lorentz Bros. Company will advertise in this publication regularly; watch for their advertisement every week. They will be offering extraordinary values. See Coupon Special on last page of this issue.

IOWA FIREMEN ORGANIZING.

Sioux City, Ia.—President Strief, of the State Federation of Labor, is now busily engaged in organizing the various city firemen of the state. Sioux City was the first city to fall into line, Council Bluffs, Fort Dodge and Marshalltown are now ready to follow the lead of this city and just as soon as President Strief can complete the necessary preliminary work each of these cities will have a charter and be prepared to probably send delegates to the International Union that is now under consideration.

METAL WORKERS STRIKE.

New York.—A strike of metal workers involving 5,000 men was declared here at a meeting of the Chandler Makers and Brass Workers' Union. Increased wages, shorter hours and a closed shop are demanded.

MOLDERS ON STRIKE.

Toledo, Ohio.—All the molders of the plants of the National Supply Company, the Ensign Foundry and the Donovan Foundry companies are on strike. The demands of the men are for a nine-hour day and a minimum wage of \$4 a day. Business Agent Otto Brach and International Organizer H. W. Clements of Grand Rapids, Mich., are the officials in charge of the trouble. Every man in the three establishments came out at the call of the officers, and 60 per cent of them secured jobs in the other foundries where the scale is paid and the hours were granted.

With the exception of the three shops which are struck owing to having refused the demands of the men, and which are being picketed, every other foundry in Toledo and Fremont and district is paying the demands of wages and hours.

SUPPORTS EIGHT-HOUR DAY.

San Francisco.—"Any thinking man who says that an eight-hour day is an unjust request is a fool, an idiot or don't know the social consciousness of America, or is unacquainted with conditions under which men are working," was the emphatic declaration of Rev. Stidger, in an address to the Labor Council on the eight-hour strike of culinary workers in this city.

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